



ORIENTATION & POLICY MANUAL

FOR

U.S. FULBRIGHT

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE-FUNDED
STUDENTS
IN NEPAL**

**THE COMMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND NEPAL**

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Introduction

This manual is designed for Department of State-funded American Student Fulbright grantees coming to Nepal after an initial selection process conducted by the Institute of International Education (IIE). It is designed to be sent to grantees following their grant approval, but prior to their arrival in Nepal and to be used as a guide and reference during the actual grant period in Nepal. It contains information on grant benefits, travel arrangements, and policies relevant to Fulbright grantees in Nepal. In addition, the manual briefly describes living conditions in Nepal (particularly Kathmandu) and offers suggestions that we hope will help in making pre-departure preparations. Fulbrighters should also use their local libraries to begin their exploration into the immensely varied and fascinating history and culture of Nepal. Additionally, there are numerous internet news sites which are useful to consult with regard to recent news relevant to Nepal (i.e., [The Kathmandu Post](#), [Republica](#), the [Himalayan Times](#) and [Nepali Times](#) are the leading English language dailies and weeklies, respectively).

The effectiveness of an American Fulbrighter in Nepal is largely dependent on the grantee's ability to relate successfully to the people of Nepal. The warmth and friendliness of the Nepali people goes a long way toward ensuring the success of this venture. The Fulbright grant in Nepal is a grant to undertake independent research, however, the Commission in Nepal can provide limited services to the grantees whose funds it administers so as to make the grantee's stay as comfortable and as rewarding as possible within the limits imposed by budget and the vagaries of life in Nepal. Ultimately, however, the success of each individual grant depends on the individual grantee. Friendliness, a high tolerance for frustration, the ability to combine tact and frankness, and a sincere eagerness to learn about Nepal and from Nepalis, are qualities that most ensure a mutually satisfying, cross-cultural experience.

The Commission in Nepal

The J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB), a statutory body of educators and public persons appointed by the President of the United States, has overall responsibility for the Fulbright program throughout the world. Acting under the FSB's guidance, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. State Department manages and administers the Fulbright program, both through bi-national organizations such as the Commission in Nepal and by contracting with private institutions in the U.S. In Nepal, the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Officer serves as Chair of the Commission's Board of Directors.

The Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States and Nepal (also known as USEF-Nepal, or the Fulbright Commission in Nepal) was established by an agreement between the United States government and the Government of Nepal in 1961 to administer educational exchange programs in Nepal. The Commission is headed by an Executive Director. Overall policy is determined by a bi-national Board of Directors consisting of ten members. This board, or a subcommittee thereof, also reviews all applications and selects the American and Nepali Fulbright scholars and students. The board consists of five Americans appointed by the United States Ambassador to Nepal (who is Honorary Chair of the Board of Directors of the Commission in Nepal), and five Nepalis appointed by the Government of Nepal.

The Fulbright program is designed to promote mutual understanding between the people of Nepal and the people of the United States through a wide exchange of knowledge and professional talents shared through educational activities. In addition to bringing American students and scholars to Nepal to lecture and conduct research, the Commission provides Fulbright and other educational grants to Nepali students and scholars for study, research, and lecturing in the U.S. Since 1961, more than 500 Nepalis have gone to the United States and over 300 Americans have come to Nepal under Fulbright program auspices. Supplementing the Fulbright grant program, the Commission also administers the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship programs, assists with East-West Center programs and other grant programs funded by the Department of State and seeks to support independent educational exchange activities by maintaining educational advising services for Nepali students.

American Fulbright Senior Scholars apply for grants through the [Council for International Exchange of Scholars \(CIES\)](#), whereas American students are initially selected through the [Institute of International Education \(IIE\)](#). There are additional grant opportunities for American students and scholars through the [Department of Education Fulbright-Hays programs](#) but grants received through these programs are not administered by the Commission in Nepal. The Commission in Nepal provides only limited support services to students and faculty funded through the Department of Education Fulbright-Hays programs.

Program Description

The Commission's U.S. Fulbright Student Program is funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. State Department. It provides an opportunity for students to carry out graduate-level study or independent research in a foreign country. In the Nepal program, U.S. student grants are given to candidates who propose to carry out an independent research study, rather than take classes. Often students are affiliated with a U.S. university but that is not a requirement. Awards have been given to at-large candidates in the arts, for example.

A Fulbright student comes to Nepal to carry out an independent research project. Students DO NOT come to Nepal to work for local or international NGOs—please be VERY clear about this with your affiliate organization if this is your situation. Similarly, there is no expectation that the student researcher will accept assignments from the university, teach classes, or maintain regular contact with a university department, unless the individual grantee deems such activity appropriate and relevant to his/her research work.

For those Fulbright students who are, at the time of the Fulbright grant in Nepal, not enrolled in a U.S.-based graduate program, it is advisable to develop and maintain relationships with individuals, either in the U.S. or in Nepal, who can assist as academic mentors and advisors. Previous experience has shown that these relationships can be of great value to student researchers in terms of assisting with questions about research methodology, technical aspects of data analysis and preparing a research project for publication. While individual Commission staff may be able to assist with introducing Fulbright grantees to well known Nepali experts in their fields, the Commission is not in a position to offer sustained individual research guidance across the broad range of fields and individual projects. It is the responsibility of the grantee to conduct an independent research project and to seek appropriate guidance and individual academic support necessary for the success of that endeavor.

In the spirit of promoting mutual understanding and academic collegiality, Fulbright students are encouraged to research and develop contacts with Nepali experts in their field of study and to be a ready participant in the exchange of information. Nepali colleagues will usually be able to offer you more advice and assistance than you will be able to give them. And, most importantly, such exchanges can be the start of important professional relationships.

Student researchers are required to submit monthly progress reports to the Commission, as well as midterm and final reports to IIE and to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. State Department. It is also the responsibility of doctoral student grantees to send a final copy of their doctoral dissertation (or equivalent research paper) funded by the Fulbright grant to the main library of Tribhuvan University.

Grant Benefits

Grant benefits are itemized in the Grant Authorization Form that students receive with their award notification. Keep your signed copy of the grant authorization form for reference to your specific benefits. It should be noted that grant benefits for students include no allowances for dependents. However, spouses and children may be eligible for an official Nepali visa through the grantee. Student grantees who are contemplating coming with a dependent spouse or child (the child must be under 21 to qualify as a dependent) must contact the Commission in Nepal before coming to Nepal to determine benefits for which the dependent may be eligible. Generally, grant benefits will include the following:

Travel

1. Fulbright student grantees (but not dependents) receive a round-trip economy flight to Nepal from their home in the U.S. by the most direct, economical route. As with other U.S. government grants, pursuant to the Fly America Act, American air carriers must be used wherever possible (e.g. across the Pacific or Atlantic). Likewise, U.S. government regulations allow Fulbright to pay or reimburse only for travel via the most direct and economical fares to and from Nepal. Grantees should not make their own travel reservations without first consulting with and gaining clearance from the Commission in Nepal. Grantees are also advised to finalize their plans with the Commission at least 60 days prior to their planned arrival in Nepal.
2. Once you have communicated your travel dates and plans to Program Administrator Mily Pradhan (mpradhan@fulbrightnepal.org.np), the Commission will ask its travel agent in Kathmandu to identify the cheapest fare available in Kathmandu from your point of origin in the U.S.
3. Using this quoted fare as a baseline, you may then make and pay for your own travel bookings if you would prefer to do so. If you choose to make and pay for your own tickets, you will have to present your ticket for reimbursement upon arrival in Kathmandu. The Commission in Nepal cannot make any travel advances. Keep in mind however, that if you make your own travel arrangements, you can be reimbursed only if you adhere to the Fly America rules and only for travel via the most direct and economical fares to and from Nepal. That is, you will be reimbursed only up to the quoted baseline fare amount that the Commission receives from its travel agent in Kathmandu.
4. Alternatively, if the Commission makes the bookings for you through its travel agent in Nepal on a US carrier that is represented in Nepal, it will have the airline office in Kathmandu send a PTA (Pre-paid Travel Authorization) to the airline office nearest your home in the U.S.

5. Grantees may alter their routes and classes of travel, add stopovers, etc. in any way they choose, provided they: a) notify and get prior permission from the Commission to do so; b) pay for any extra cost over and above the lowest economy fare quotation obtained by the Commission; and c) travel by American flag carriers whenever and wherever possible. Grantees choosing to make their own travel arrangements according to these provisions may be reimbursed up to the cost of the cheapest and most direct route cost on U.S. carriers after they have arrived in Kathmandu. Any amounts over the lowest fare quote that the Commission obtains (e.g., for stopovers in excess of those normally required by the route, or upgrades to business class) cannot be reimbursed.
6. All grantees must **confirm their arrival time via email at least one week prior to scheduled arrival** so that we can make the necessary arrangements. Since the Commission is closed both Saturdays and Sundays, we ask that you plan your arrival for a non-holiday weekday within office hours if you wish to be met at the airport. If you would prefer to use your own means of transport, your arrival date and time can be at your own convenience.

Baggage Allowance

An excess baggage allowance is also provided in the grant. If not needed at the outset, the allowance can be retained and used at the end of the grant. Most grantees find they have more to take back with them than what they brought.

Visas

It is neither necessary nor advisable to obtain a visa for Nepal (in the U.S.) prior to your departure. All grantees must enter Nepal on “official” visas that are obtained upon arrival at the Kathmandu airport by using the following procedure: (Do not contact the Nepali Embassy or Consulate in the U.S. about this.)

1. At least six weeks prior to departure grantees should inform Program Administrator Mily Pradhan by e-mail (mpradhan@fulbrightnepal.org.np) of their complete passport information, including for any dependents.
2. The Commission (through the U.S. Embassy) then notifies the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nepal of the expected arrival of a Fulbright grantee.
3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides the Commission with a letter that will entitle the grantee to a visa fee waiver. This letter will be scanned and sent by email as an attachment to you prior to departure from the U.S.
4. Upon arrival at the Kathmandu airport, present this letter, along with two passport photos to the Nepali immigration officials at the “Diplomatic and Official” visa counter. (You will also need passport photos for other purposes as well, so bring a half dozen with you.) *PLEASE NOTE that you are entitled to a Gratis Visa upon arrival and no visa fee should be paid at the airport.*

At the earliest, for the grantee and each accompanying dependent, please send a scanned photocopy of your passport, ensuring clarity of the following information to Mily Pradhan (mpradhan@fulbrightnepal.org.np):

- Complete name, as listed in the passport
- Passport number
- Place of passport issue
- Date of passport issue and date of expiration

NOTE: Those traveling via Bangkok or Singapore may apply for Thai or Singapore visas upon arrival in those countries. However, if traveling via India, an Indian visa is required if exiting the airport and must be obtained before departing from the U.S. Many grantees decide to visit India following the completion of, or even during their grants. In recent years, Nepal Fulbright grantees have been invited to attend a Regional Fulbright Conference hosted by the U.S.-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) for which travel to India is required. Thus, it is **strongly recommended** that grantees get an Indian visa in the US because, both in case of potentially necessary emergency departure from Nepal and for potential travel to India to attend the Regional Fulbright Conference, an Indian visa is either enormously valuable or required. Further, it is impossible to acquire one quickly in Kathmandu. Thus we recommend that you apply for an Indian visa through an Indian consulate in the U.S. prior to your departure for Nepal. *IMPORTANT NOTE: In December 2009, India introduced a new rule that prevents Tourist Visa holders from re-visiting India within 2 months after last leaving. If you plan to travel in or through India, please plan your travel accordingly.*

Orientation

The Commission will hold a week-long orientation program for student grantees that all must attend. This orientation is scheduled for the third week in August (beginning on Monday, August 15, 2011) and will concentrate on the current situation in Nepal; administrative, reporting and security procedures required by the Commission; and other issues relevant to research and life in Nepal. In addition to the briefing by the Commission, there is also a required briefing by the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Office.

Maintenance Stipend

The grant includes a maintenance stipend that most grantees find is quite ample for living in Kathmandu or the field. The grantee will find that it is several times as much as a full professor at Tribhuvan University receives. The stipend is paid *in Nepali rupees* on a monthly basis by the Commission's Fiscal Officer. Should a grantee occasionally require that the stipend, or a portion of the stipend, be paid in U.S. dollars rather than rupees, such payment can be arranged, if approved by the Executive Director and provided the Commission has a sufficient dollar balance in its dollar account.

Housing Allowance

The Commission in Nepal, in contrast to most other Fulbright programs in other countries, rents a limited number of basically furnished flats for Department of State-funded student grantees residing in Kathmandu. This extra courtesy provided by Nepal Commission staff requires much staff time and energy and should not be taken for granted as an entitlement of the grant. It is rather an extra service provided by the Commission in Nepal to assist grantees in locating themselves in apartments with trusted landlords in safe neighborhoods with extra facilities – such as gas water heaters and inverters – that the Commission has managed to install over time. Ultimately, landlords have responsibility for their property and should be informed about any property damage (i.e., broken toilets or windows, clogged sinks, etc.) which would require maintenance or repair. While Commission staff may be able to assist with identifying carpenters, electricians, or plumbers, it is the responsibility of the grantee to communicate with the landlord about property maintenance. If situations necessitate, Commission staff may assist in facilitating communication between the landlord and the grantee. There should be no expectation on the part of any grantee that any Commission staff act as maintenance workers.

Students receive a housing allowance adequate for renting flats in Kathmandu and often find that sharing accommodations with other Fulbright grantees is a good way to build relationships and to get personal and academic peer support. While the Commission does keep a limited number of furnished flats on lease for student grantees, it cannot guarantee that one of these flats will be available or that it will meet the specific preferences of each grantee. In order to maintain these flats, the Commission must enter into lease agreements with landlords. While these longer-term lease agreements assist the Commission in maintaining reasonably-priced accommodations, as in the case of any lease agreement in any country, they have certain obligations around which there is limited flexibility. Therefore, when Fulbright grantees indicate that they would like to avail themselves of Commission-arranged housing, they must be prepared to abide by the provisions of the lease agreement (i.e., sufficient notification of the lease termination, adherence to payment schedules for utilities, etc.)

Many students make housing arrangements on their own according to their own location preferences. While Commission staff may assist students in locating appropriate housing, given the vagaries of the housing market, no guarantees can be made that the options will fulfill all of the students' preferences. Students who rent their own flats must obtain a written lease in English to enable you to understand all of your rental rights and obligations. Additionally, students making their own housing arrangements are not entitled to additional housing benefits beyond the amount specified as the housing allowance in the Grant Authorization Form.

As far as possible, students are encouraged to take the Commission-rented flats as experience has shown that both the search for appropriate housing and the setting up of house can be extremely frustrating and time-consuming. Additionally, the

Commission has managed over time to equip all Commission-rented flats with extra facilities such as gas water heaters and inverters; facilities with which other rented apartments in Kathmandu may not be equipped.

If a grantee does not plan to rent a flat in Kathmandu, but needs housing at another research site, the housing allowance can be applied to rents on a direct cost basis.

Language Training Allowance

The week-long orientation program includes beginning Nepali language lessons arranged by the Commission. For subsequent language learning, a separate grant benefit is allocated for in-country language learning. Because of the importance of being able to speak the local language(s), grantees are *strongly* encouraged to make use of this language training allowance. There are a number of Nepali language trainers who have worked with Fulbright grantees and can be recommended by the Commission. (If the language allowance amount is not used for language training, it can be used for translation services or otherwise added to the incidental allowance.)

Incidental Allowance

Your grant includes an allowance for the "purchase of supplies and equipment and for other expenses deemed necessary by the Commission for the successful realization of individual projects." The exact amount is determined by the Commission in light of the type of project, normally reimbursed in Nepali rupees.

- Reimbursement Claims: Claims should be submitted to the Fiscal Officer and reimbursement will be made normally along with the monthly maintenance payment. Air ticket receipts should be attached to claims. Proper receipts for other items should also be attached, including signed receipts from field assistants, language teachers, etc. Grantees should explain the relationship of the expenditure to their work, if not readily apparent. NOTE: Incidental expenses can be reimbursed in dollars only if they were originally made in dollars.
- Allowable Expenditures: You may claim reimbursement for the following items out of your incidental allowance:
 1. ***Travel within Nepal connected with your project*** - e.g. for attendance at a conference or to conduct research at a field site outside the Kathmandu Valley. Prior approval of all travel must be obtained. Travel within the Kathmandu Valley is not reimbursed, nor are any other charges for inter-city travel other than the actual fare. Thus grantees must pay all hotel and food bills, taxis, tips, etc. themselves from their monthly maintenance allowance.
 2. ***The cost of printed materials (books, pamphlets, maps, etc.) required for the project*** - this does not include books of a general background nature,

which can be borrowed from libraries or which grantees should bring with them from the U.S. (Note: although there are a number of book stores in Kathmandu where a broad range of books can be purchased, it is unlikely that specialized and/or general reference books in your field will be available. If you require such books for your project, it is recommended that you carry them with you from the U.S.)

3. **Equipment, materials** - Supplies and equipment required to carry out the research project, such as photographic or scientific materials.
4. **Services** - such as photocopying, secretarial services, and translation services. Please note that while the Commission is not able to make its office equipment and secretarial services available to grantees except in an emergency, there is a resource room available on the Commission premises which grantees can use.
5. *Please note that, according to FSB policy, all non-expendable equipment and books purchased with the incidental allowances are the property of the Commission in Nepal. With the approval of the Commission, these can be donated to the department or another institution where the grantee is officially assigned. The Commission, however, allows research grantees to retain maps, pamphlets, and government publications purchased with the incidental allowance. Other Nepali publications needed for the completion of projects may be retained with approval by the Commission.*

Insurance

The Fulbright program provides basic health and accident insurance for all grantees. This Fulbright insurance however, is considered **secondary** to any other insurance a grantee may have and grantees are encouraged not to give up any existing insurance they may have in anticipation of the Fulbright coverage. Moreover, grantees must make separate arrangements for health insurance for any dependents who may accompany them. Information about plans for Fulbright dependents can be obtained through IIE. Any such coverage for dependents should contain provisions for emergency medical evacuation from Nepal. (Note: Experience has shown that although generic medicines can often be obtained, it can be extraordinarily difficult to obtain specific prescribed medicines in Nepal. Therefore it is ***highly recommended*** that grantees with ongoing medicinal and/or equipment requirements bring with them to Nepal enough prescribed medicines and/or medical equipment to cover the length of their grant period and/or be prepared to make private arrangements for the acquisition of medicines and/or equipment. The diplomatic pouch CANNOT be used for the transport of prescribed medicines and/or medical equipment.)

Financial Information

The grant begins with one month's cash advance paid in Nepali rupees, upon the grantee's arrival. Thereafter the stipend will be paid by the Fiscal Officer on a regular monthly basis. Stipends are ordinarily paid in rupees, but if a grantee requires dollars, a special request may be made for payment of a stipend in dollars although such payment is always conditional upon there being a sufficient balance in the Commission's dollar account.

Bank Accounts

Upon arrival, grantees should consider opening an account at NABIL Bank Ltd., where the Commission has its bank account. Commission staff will help in these and in other transactions. It is recommended that grantees bring their U.S. checkbooks with them, as certain expenditures must be paid in U.S. dollars. Arrangements can be made to effect wire transfers to and from a NABIL bank account from a U.S. account although there are fees associated with such transactions. As your grant period nears completion, keep in mind that exchanging excess Nepali rupees into U.S. dollars can only legally be done through producing receipts showing exchange from U.S. dollars to Nepali rupees. Grantees should manage their finances in such a way as to minimize their rupee holdings as their grants come to a close.

These days there are more and more ATMs in Kathmandu and Patan, and many will work with an American ATM card (with charges applied). (Note: If the expiration date of your U.S. bank account ATM card does not extend to the end of your grant period, you may have difficulty in obtaining a renewed card. It is recommended that you ensure that you have a valid ATM and other necessary cards for the full period of your grant. Although theft or loss of cards has not been a problem for many grantees, it is nevertheless very useful to keep in a safe place a list of bank accounts and contact information for all ATM and credit cards in the unfortunate case that your cards are stolen.)

U.S. Income Tax

Fulbright grants are taxable as U.S. income. However, neither IIE, nor the Commission, nor the Department of State withholds taxes from grant payments nor are 1099 or W2 forms issued to grantees. Since it is not a U.S. entity, the bi-national Commission in Nepal does not provide 1099s, but will give grantees a letter at the end of the calendar year listing the total amount of your grant. Grant payments are not subject to taxation by Nepal. The Commission in Nepal is not in a position to answer any detailed questions concerning tax liability. Any questions concerning Federal or State income tax matters should be taken up with officials of the Internal Revenue Service or the appropriate State revenue authority.

- Further information may be obtained by calling 1(800) TAX-FORM and asking for the *Scholarships and Fellowships Publication 520* or from the website http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/forms_pubs/.
- Other helpful documents include Publication 54 “Tax Guide for US Citizens and Resident Aliens Abroad” and Publication 463 “Travel, Entertainment and Gift Expenses”.
- We recommend that grantees see a tax adviser in the U.S. before coming to Nepal. The following IRS publications available at local IRS offices are useful:
 - Tax Information for U.S. Scholars
 - Income Tax Benefits for U.S. Citizens Who Go Overseas

What to Bring

Upon arrival, you will be presented with a welcome kit that should answer some of your questions about living in Nepal. Commission staff will also be happy to answer any questions not covered in this manual.

Climate and Clothing

There are four seasons in Kathmandu: cold in December and January, cool and mild in October, November, February, and March; hot and dry in April and May; and hot, humid and rainy in the monsoon months June through September. Temperatures are generally quite moderate. In the hot season daytime temperatures range in the 80's while winter days are in the 60's. Winter nights can get cold (30's and 40's) and seem much colder due to the lack of central heating and insulation. Quilts, electric blankets and room heaters (which can be purchased locally) help solve the problem.

Although temperatures are moderate, the lack of central heating necessitates warm clothing for the winter months, often more for indoors than out! Tibetan shops stock a variety of woolens, but it is still advisable to bring warm sweaters and a jacket for outdoors. A zip-out liner provides between season flexibility. Dressing in layers proves quite practical. Other than December, January, and February, the daytime weather is quite warm, so lightweight summer clothing is in use most months of the year.

Although shopping malls are on the rise, well-fitting and superior-quality shoes, socks and branded readymade clothes are not always available on the local market, so buy them before leaving the States. Yarn goods, mostly cotton and/or polyester, are available in Kathmandu, as are inexpensive tailors. Bring extra underwear because the selection in Kathmandu shops is limited. Made-to-order clothing can supplement but certainly not substitute for bringing along all the clothing you will need during your stay, although the bazaars of Kathmandu are overflowing with low-priced (and often reasonably good) "knock-offs" of famous brand name clothing, particularly outdoor clothing.

While dress is generally informal in Kathmandu, as U.S. representatives abroad, Fulbrighters should try to look well-groomed on all occasions. A set or two of dress clothes for receptions and other formal engagements will be necessary. Special clothing items like bathing suits, sportswear, and formal wear may be difficult to buy in Kathmandu.

Household and Miscellany

Apartments for student Fulbrighters are equipped with basic furniture and some household items. Dishes, silverware, pots and pans, water filters, bed linens and blankets are available in the local markets, although it is advisable to bring a good sleeping bag, towels and bed linens from the U.S., as good quality cotton products are not readily available. Past grantees suggest supplementing these basic furnishings according to personal preferences. For example, you may bring a favorite cookbook, sharp kitchen knives, or extra towels. Most grantees buy some items in Kathmandu according to their preferences and at the end of their stay sell or donate them.

In making decisions about what to bring, it is important to understand the unpredictability of the market in Kathmandu. Things available in abundance disappear abruptly, while other items traditionally unavailable may suddenly flood the market. Luxury items (like perfumes and cosmetics) are expensive and choice is limited. Another quirk of the market is that an item may in fact be available, if only you can figure out which of the many, many small shops is the one that stocks it. In recent years, however, the construction of large supermarkets in various parts of Kathmandu and other urban centers has made the acquisition of foreign goods fairly straightforward. Nevertheless, the supply of basic necessities such as cooking gas, kerosene, and petrol can be subject to the vagaries of the import market and can undergo unavailability or drastic price surges at times of shortage. Grantees need to be adaptable when these shortages occur.

Computers, Cell Phones, etc.

If you need a computer for your research, you should consider bringing with you a laptop, any specialized software you may need, backup hardware **and an extended-life battery**. If you plan on bringing electrical appliances of any kind, do remember that Nepal's power supply is 220 volts. Because the voltage is unstable, many grantees purchase voltage transformers and stabilizers, which are available locally and quite cheaply.

Most, if not all US cell phones are incompatible with cellular service in Nepal. The service is tolerable at best in the Kathmandu Valley and cell phones as well as SIM cards for local use are widely available. Cell phones are NOT useful for long distance calls to/from the U.S. because of very bad sound quality. The Kathmandu Valley is only recently becoming home to wireless and high speed cable internet services. Some Fulbright housing currently has these features but the speed and dependability of the connections is highly variable. Such technology is still quite a ways behind what is considered average in urban U.S. Until April of 2006 the Commission office itself used only dial-up internet connections.

Health Precautions & Medical Care

Before leaving the United States — and in order for your grant to be finally approved — you must undergo and pass a physical examination using the forms for this purpose that will be provided to you by IIE. After you have passed your physical, please bring a copy of the physical examination form with you to Nepal. You must also secure and bring with you to Nepal an international health card (i.e., a World Health Organization, or WHO Card) and make sure that all of your immunizations for those diseases specified by the Center for Disease Control for Nepal are up to date. The Fulbright program does not cover the cost of any immunizations. (Appendix III of this manual is a list of the inoculations currently recommended by the American Embassy Medical Unit for Nepal. This list — which all grantees should follow — may be more comprehensive than the list recommended by the CDC.) Anti-malaria pills are recommended for those who will be visiting the Tarai region for any length of time; the latest anti-malarial drug in the U.S., Malarone™, is not yet available in Nepal. If you will be spending significant time in the Tarai, consult your doctor about this drug. ***Remember to bring your record of vaccinations (e.g., a WHO Yellow Card or similar) and a copy of your completed physical examination form with you when you come to Nepal.*** If your doctor or travel clinic doesn't have the "International Certificate of Vaccination and Prophylaxis" (the WHO Yellow Card), then you can use whatever kind of card or list of vaccinations-received that your clinic can provide you. The main point is to know what vaccinations you have had and which ones you need.

For those who regularly take medications or require medical supplies, it is very important that you ensure before leaving the U.S. that you have with you a sufficient supply of your prescribed medicines and/or supplies to suffice for the entire grant period. Having medicines and/or medical supplies sent from the U.S. is generally NOT covered by insurance and past experience has proved very stressful for grantees who cannot have quick and inexpensive delivery of required medicines or medical supplies. Although there may be comparable medicines available on the Nepali market, it requires a doctor visit to enquire about the equivalent medicines. It is your responsibility to enquire about insurance coverage for medicines and medical supplies, the Commission in Nepal cannot answer detailed questions about the provisions of the health insurance coverage offered by the Department of State.

Remember also that the Fulbright insurance covers only the grantee, not dependents. If dependents accompany you to Nepal, they must have their own medical insurance and that insurance must include medical air-evacuation coverage.

International Standard Clinics

Fulbright grantees have the choice of two clinics of international standard in Kathmandu: the CIWEC clinic www.ciwec-clinic.com (operating since 1982 and located in Lainchaur) and the Nepal International Clinic (operated since 1989 by a Nepali physician who is a U.S. Board certified internist, located one block south of the Narayanhiti Palace Museum)

<http://www.nepalinternationalclinic.com/index.html>

Grantees who have chosen CIWEC or NIC have found the services to be good. CIWEC and NIC fees are comparable to those paid in the U.S. Bills from the CIWEC and NIC must be submitted as claims under your own insurance, or secondarily as claims under the Department of State insurance policy that applies to Fulbrighters. However, every medical treatment or illness does carry a \$30 deductible under the Department of State policy.

Pollution and Other Environmental Concerns

Major urban areas in Nepal, most especially Kathmandu, suffer from disturbing levels of air and water pollution. Many grantees find wearing a face mask while walking or traveling by bicycle useful. For those grantees with pre-existing respiratory system difficulties, it will be important to consult your physician about prophylactic measures that might be taken to avoid exacerbating the condition.

Food and Water Precautions

Generally, in traveling through Asia, you should drink only boiled and filtered water. Avoid wet plates and utensils, uncooked vegetables or fruits which cannot be peeled, un-boiled milk, and cold foods which may have been contaminated by handling. Intestinal troubles are common, but a little caution and common sense will go a long way towards minimizing their effect.

Personal and Household Safety

The Commission places the utmost importance on your safety and security while in Nepal. Although personal safety issue will be discussed at length in the orientation program, the following information is provided as a resource to assist you in making good decisions to ensure your own personal safety while in Nepal.

- Gender discrimination and sexual harassment are issues that can emerge for both female and male Fulbright grantees in Nepal. Although urban Nepali society has undergone much change in the past twenty years, it remains that there are cross-cultural differences related to gender and sexuality that may present challenges for grantees. Many Nepalis have notions of who Americans are based on what they may have seen on TV. Fulbrighters may encounter pre-conceived notions based on these or other stereotypes. Although each situation will present its own set of challenges and potentials, past Fulbrighter's experience suggests

that taking some precautions with regard to dress and behavior can be helpful. In general, it is useful for both woman and men to dress in culturally appropriate ways. It is recommended that individual grantees, especially women, avoid – to the maximum extent possible – traveling alone. This is especially relevant in the tourist areas of Kathmandu where Fulbrighters, and other foreigners, commonly experience harassment in bars, taxis and on the street. It is also advisable for women and men to avoid being alone in a room or a flat with someone of the opposite gender as these sorts of situations have in the past created many misunderstandings.

- Political demonstrations, rallies and other mass gatherings are best avoided as they can quickly turn from peaceful gathering to violent conflagration. The Commission will communicate with all grantees about any planned protests which are known to the RSO. However, it is not uncommon, especially during periods of heightened political uncertainty, for unplanned protests to occur in Nepal. All grantees are advised to walk away from any gathering crowd and to avoid major intersections when protests seem likely.
- Theft of belongings from rooms left unattended or of personal belongings left unattended are common, most especially in tourist areas of Nepal. It is advisable that all grantees retain insurance for more expensive property (i.e., specialized equipment such as cameras, bicycles, or technology) and to routinely back-up all important computer files. If required, CD or DVD backup copies of your computer files can be stored at the Commission office.
- Transportation and traffic accidents are common in urban areas as any existing traffic rules are mostly ignored. It is important for all grantees to adjust to the traffic patterns on Nepali streets so that you can protect yourself from potential danger.
- Home safety recommendations from Cathy and Krish, March 2011. The following are recommendations from two current U.S. Fulbright Senior Scholars who recently experienced a house fire at the their residence in Patan:
 - “Having experienced a home emergency in Nepal, we want to share the following recommendations for Fulbrighters in Nepal.
 - Know the locations and operation of all door and window exits. Make sure that you know at least two reliable exits from the home
 - Check the electrical wiring inside the house and know the location of the main power shut off switch
 - Keep flammable items away from sources of sparks and heat - stoves , heaters, fans, irons, etc
 - Know the location of the fire extinguisher if there is one
 - Put new batteries in the smoke detector and make sure it is unobstructed. (It is a good idea to get one if there isn't one in the home.)

- Know how to reach the home owner or caretaker, as well as a phone number for emergencies.
- Keep a charged phone nearby.
- Have a cloth or mask available for breathing if the house fills with smoke.
- Have clothes and shoes in a safe place nearby in case you need to make a quick exit.
- Have enough cash to replace any necessary items that may be lost in a fire, flood, etc., as well as to buy food if eating at home is no longer possible. (Have enough cash handy to tide you over for at least a couple of days.)
- Have a back up and contingency plan in case of loss of vital data or documents.
- Give the landlord/caretaker an emergency phone number (i.e., the Commission Office, as well as mobile numbers for the Program Officer and Executive Director)
- Have an ID with you at all times”

Commission Support Services & Policies

The Commission in Nepal (through the U.S. Embassy) will arrange for official visas for grantees for the period of their grant. It is important to remember that the visa is good only for the duration of the grant. Special permits for out-of-valley field research sites are increasingly difficult to obtain. Although the Commission may be able to assist grantees in attempting to secure them if your work makes this necessary, grantees should be prepared to change research plans if permits are not issued by the Government of Nepal. The Commission will assist in arranging airline tickets and shipment of goods and, when requested, in making appointments with Nepali academics and preparing letters of introduction. For the use of Fulbright grantees in periods of heightened load-shedding, a resource room in the USEF-Nepal compound has been made available with basic facilities where grantees can continue work during USEF-Nepal office hours.

Fulbright grantees in Nepal are considered private American citizens who do not fall under Chief of Mission (i.e., the U.S. Ambassador in Nepal) authority. The U.S. Embassy in Nepal recognizes however, that Fulbright grantees are a distinct group of individuals because they are under U.S. government sponsorship when overseas and they extend certain courtesies to Fulbright grantees including eligibility to join and use the U.S. Commissary and the Phora Durbar (“American Club”) recreational compound run by the American Mission Association in Kathmandu. Fulbrighters also have very limited use of the letter-only diplomatic pouch at the U.S. Embassy. However, Fulbright grantees do not have access to the U.S. Embassy Medical Unit. It is important for grantees to understand that any courtesies extended by the U.S. Embassy in Nepal are not to be taken for granted as misuse of such courtesies can result in them not being available for future grantees.

Domestic Travel Policy

Perhaps the most important set of rules governing the Fulbright program in Nepal are related to communication about grantee whereabouts, as it is essential that the Commission be able to contact grantees in the event of an emergency or natural disaster. As there was a protracted period of internal conflict in Nepal and there remain conditions of social and political instability, grantees must comply with all domestic travel policies and security procedures set in place by the Commission and by the Regional Security Office (RSO) of the U.S. Embassy in Nepal. Up until very recently, Fulbright grantees in Nepal were restricted to work within the Kathmandu Valley only. Recently, however, this restriction has been lifted and grantees are currently allowed to travel and conduct research across the country with the prior approval of the Commission and the RSO.

In order to maintain the privilege of this freedom of travel for all Fulbright grantees in Nepal, it is essential that every grantee take personal responsibility for:

- advanced detailed planning of any travel,
- clear communication with the Commission about any changes in travel plans, and
- clear provisions made for any period of time when a grantee anticipates being located in an area potentially inaccessible by phone networks.

In order to ensure that Fulbright grantees in Nepal are not exposed to security risks, all travel within Nepal by Fulbright grantees must first be approved by the Commission and by the RSO. The process by which this happens is as follows:

- Upon your arrival in Nepal, a Travel Request Form will be made available to you. **This form must be filled out in detail and submitted by email (to the Program Administrator and Program Officer) at least a week before your intended travel.**
- This form is then submitted by the Program Administrator to the RSO who communicates approval once granted.
- Grantees are not to travel until after they receive this official approval from the Commission and from the RSO.
- With that approval are listed emergency contact information for police and other government officials in the destination area. It is important for Fulbright grantees to bring that information with them when they travel so that they can access any emergency services if necessary.

While the Commission does understand that travel can be difficult to plan in advance and that plans may be subject to frequent last minute changes, it is essential that grantees undertake sufficient advanced planning for their travel and remain in touch with the Commission so that the Commission can immediately contact grantees if necessary. Given the changing nature of the political situation in Nepal and the potential for natural disaster in different areas of the country, *it is essential that all grantees adhere strictly to this policy.* Failure to do so could result in grant revocation.

Reimbursement Policy

The Commission recognizes that each individual grantee's project requires different activities and resources and therefore the types and amounts of expenditures will vary across individual grants. The Fiscal Officer seeks to maintain flexibility, responsiveness, and fairness in the disbursement of all grant funds but cannot in any case make disbursements exceeding the amounts designated in the Grant Authorization Form. There may be flexibility to distribute grant benefits across different benefit categories, although the reimbursement of one category of expenditure from a non-related grant benefit category requires approval of the Fiscal Officer.

All reimbursement requests must be accompanied by proper receipts which will prove credible to the Commission auditing team which conducts detailed audits of the Commission's accounts on a yearly basis. A proper receipt is one on which there is a clearly printed name (i.e., a company name or the name of the individual who received the amount designated); a clear amount; a clear description of the item or service purchased; a clear date of purchase; and, in the case of receipts for individual services, a signature of the individual receiving the designated amount.

Grantees should be prepared that the reimbursement process will take some time, given that Commission policy requires that all reimbursement requests be approved by the Fiscal Officer and the Executive Director, and all disbursement of funds signed off by the Treasurer of the Board of Directors.

Packages

The only way to receive packages (other than documents) is to have them sent through international mail (USEF-Nepal, GPO Box 380, Kathmandu, Nepal). Although grantees are entitled to customs-free entry of packages, the Commission does not recommend such shipments as the clearance procedure is an eleven-step process. Moreover, the loss rate is very high.

Mail/shipments through the Diplomatic Pouch

Nepal is a member of the International Postal Union and has regular mail service with other countries but it is not reliable. For this reason, for letters only (and they must weigh under one pound) the privilege of the State Department diplomatic pouch was granted to Fulbright grantees in Nepal. Mail being sent to you in Nepal should be addressed as follows:

American Embassy Kathmandu
Attn: Fulbright – 'Name of the Grantee'
Department of State
6190 Kathmandu Place
Washington, D.C. 20521-6190

You must use the above address as the return address on any correspondence you mail through the pouch. U.S. domestic postage is used for diplomatic pouch mail and may be purchased in limited quantities from the Fulbright office. **PLEASE NOTE:** This privilege is only for first class letter mail and is not terribly fast, as letters going to or coming from Nepal can take as long as a month. No packages whatsoever can be sent to Fulbright grantees through the diplomatic pouch. Violation of this regulation may mean that present and future Fulbrighters will be deprived of the pouch privilege.

If you have friends who will be writing to you from countries other than the U.S., in the interest of speed they might want to write to you in care of the Commission's post office box (USEF-Nepal, GPO Box 380, Kathmandu, Nepal). However, there is always a risk of loss or theft with regular international mail. **Checks and cash should not be sent through the international mail.**

In addition to the regular mail, grantees may also send and receive documents using one of the international courier services such as DHL or FedEx, both of which have offices in Nepal. These courier services however, are generally limited to the sending and receipt of documents only. Though generally reliable and fast, they tend to be expensive. Documents sent to you via these services should be addressed to you at the address below.

Please advise senders that including the phone number is vital:

USEF-Nepal
G.P.O. Box 380
Gyaneshwor
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 4444780

Commissary & Recreational Privileges

Fulbright grantees in Nepal are granted the courtesy by the U.S. Embassy in Nepal to use of the American Commissary run by the American Mission Association on a membership basis. The Commissary stocks a selection of groceries, frozen foods, toiletries, over-the-counter medicines, liquor, tobacco, and some incidentals, such as flashlights and kitchen ware, but no clothes items or fresh vegetables. To use the Commissary you must join the American Mission Association (AMA), which also entitles members to use the AMA's recreation compound, Phora Durbar, which has a swimming pool, tennis and squash courts, work-out room, and snack bar. To join the AMA requires a capital deposit (fully refundable) of \$500. The capital deposit must be paid by a U.S. dollar check. In addition to the capital deposit, AMA members must pay monthly dues of \$60 for singles, \$75 for a couple, and \$90 for a family of three or more.

The membership approval process for AMA can be very lengthy, so it is recommended to those who wish to become members, to submit an application as soon as possible after your arrival in Kathmandu.

Living in Kathmandu

Daily living in the Kathmandu Valley and surrounding areas can be as awe-inspiring as it is challenging. Traffic snarls, poor road conditions, air and water pollution, shortages of electricity, water, cooking gas and petrol are as much part of everyday life in Kathmandu as are the sweet sounds of children playing, sacred temple bells ringing out their prayers, and the remarkable frequency of open-hearted hospitality and random kindness of complete strangers. World-class hotels and medical facilities, and a small but increasing number of Western-style stores, coexist with traditional and very numerous open-air shops. These shops, frequently located on the first floor of Nepal homes, sell everything from fruits, vegetables, grains, and live poultry, to exquisite silver and gold jewelry, refrigerators, cold medicine, and Internet service. Many things available in the U.S. can be purchased at these shops, but often not by recognizable brand name.

Because of overcrowding in the Kathmandu Valley, water shortages are common during March to May, the driest months. The Kathmandu population has more than doubled in the last 10 years, with comparatively little infrastructure improvement. Depending on their living arrangements, people may carefully conserve and/or buy additional water. The electric supply, dependent on water resources as well, can be severely restricted. At this writing (spring 2011) most areas of Nepal receive only eight hours per day of electricity; four of those hours are in the middle of the night. Many households buy inverters that store electricity for limited use during the “load shedding” (no electricity) hours.

Centrally heated or cooled houses in Nepal are the exception. Consequently, many Nepalis use gas heaters in their living areas during the coldest months, November through February. They may also heat water by solar panels. Some households have installed gas or electric water heaters (“geezers”) for showering with hot water.

Limited electricity means that refrigeration, especially during the warm summer months, can be problematic. Most households shop for food several times per week, and when purchased, meat is generally cooked and consumed immediately. Fresh fruit and vegetables are abundant, especially in open-air shops. It is important, however, to thoroughly clean and dry fresh fruits and vegetables, and cook meat well. It is essential to drink only boiled, filtered or safely bottled water. To help overcome difficulties with food purchase and preparation, many people employ a domestic helper to assist with food shopping, cooking and clothes washing.

Power Outrages (aka “Load-shedding”)

A common feature of daily life in much of Nepal now is “load-shedding.” As Nepal’s electrical demands far exceed the production of power, the Government imposes scheduled blackouts on neighborhoods of Kathmandu and all other major cities in the country. The hours without power vary from 6 to 16 hours a day *WITHOUT POWER*. The worst months are in winter and spring—from December to May—and

during these months everyone in the city resorts to various means to store electricity or to do without. Grantees should bring battery powered headlamps, and consider bringing an “emergency light” with them. You might also consider bringing solar rechargeable lights, computer batteries, etc. For those who MUST have constant access to a computer for their work, load shedding is often the single greatest adaptation you will have to make. Consider it a fact of life and try to plan accordingly.

Political Disturbances

The political situation in Nepal has been fluid and subject to sometimes very rapid changes over the past twenty years. General strikes, shut downs – or *banda* – are fairly common both at the national level and locally. While some *bandas* are announced well in advance, some are called very quickly and there is little time to stock extra food, water and other provisions. In light of these *bandas*, it is very useful for grantees to remain flexible in planning work and travel schedules and to keep a stock of provisions in case there is an extended period of time when transportation, business and other general services are affected. Communications about the security situation are regularly sent out by the RSO at the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu and forwarded to Fulbright grantees.

Telephone & Internet

Nepal is now connected to the international satellite system, so telephone calls to the U.S., though relatively expensive, can often be made from one's own telephone. For international dialing to Nepal, the Nepal country code is 977 and Kathmandu city code is 1. These numbers are generally followed by a seven digit phone number for landlines or a ten digit number for mobile phones. Many grantees use Skype, or similar internet phone services, to make calls cheaply to the United States from Nepal.

The Commission in Nepal has its own fax machine (977-1-4410881). Grantees can receive faxes on this machine. However, grantees will be charged to send faxes from the Commission. There are many commercial fax outlets in Kathmandu, and in addition, Nepal now has several cheap and well run e-mail services and Internet Service Providers. Most grantees bring laptop computers and have e-mail installed soon after arrival, using one of the several Kathmandu-based Internet Service Providers.

Transportation

Most Fulbright student grantees find that locally-purchased bicycles and/or traveling on public transportation to be sufficient for their transportation needs. Given the dangers associated with driving in Nepal, the Commission discourages grantees from driving motorcycles or cars themselves. Taxis are readily available in Nepal and are (compared to the U.S.) relatively inexpensive, with a cross town, 30-minute ride rarely exceeding \$5.00. It is wise to negotiate the payment amount before accepting the ride or to insist that the meter be run.

Blogging about your Fulbright Experience

As of May 2009, the U.S. Department of State has a new policy which reads:

“Web-Based Media: Grantees who share their Fulbright experiences publicly via web-based media are responsible to acknowledge that theirs is not an official Department of State website or blog, and that the views and information presented are their own and do not represent the Fulbright Program or the U.S. Department of State. Any grantee who posts inappropriate or offensive material on the Internet in relation to the Fulbright Program may be subject to revocation or termination of their grant.”

Commission grantees are increasingly using social media as a means to remain in communication with friends and family in the US and to connect with new friends in Nepal. While the Commission does not in any way discourage blogging and/or posting on social media such as Facebook or Twitter, it encourages grantees to remain aware both that posts on such sites are public information and that potentially complicated situations could arise if posts are not thoughtfully considered and expressed.

Working in Nepal

Fulbright student grantees in Nepal engage in independent research projects varying across a broad array of different fields of interest. Although grantees are expected to undertake their work independently (or with the supervision of advisors at their U.S. universities), the Commission in Nepal can provide some social networking opportunities to grantees that are aimed at assisting grantees in meeting Nepali academics or professionals in their respective fields. These social networking opportunities are generally with members of the Board of Directors of the Commission in Nepal and with Nepali Fulbright alumni who often hold key positions in academia, government and in non-governmental organizations. The Commission encourages grantees to network with relevant Nepali academics based at the main universities – Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University – and other universities and colleges and/or to those involved in public intellectual life or otherwise involved in work related to the grantee's field of study. When requested, the Commission will provide letters of introduction to particular university faculty although the Commission is not equipped to assist grantees in researching and contacting particular individuals relevant to their field of study.

As was noted above in the Visa section of this manual, Fulbright students are granted "official" visas arranged through the U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There is no other requirement for research permission unless the grantee is undertaking health-related research which requires approval of the [Nepal Health Research Council](#) or the grantee seeks to undertake research in areas restricted by the Nepal Government's Ministry of Immigration and Boundaries (grantees seeking such permission should not assume that it will be forthcoming, but should rather be prepared for a long process of permission-seeking and justification for the research to be undertaken in those areas). Other foreign scholars undertaking research in Nepal require affiliation to the [Centre for International Relations at Tribhuvan University](#) although this affiliation is not required of Fulbright grantees in Nepal.

Nepal's Higher Education System

Tribhuvan University, the national government supported university, was founded in the mid-1960's, when Nepal's few colleges broke their affiliation with Patna University in India. The entire education system, which started virtually from scratch in the early 1950's, was based on the British Indian model. In 1973, the then His Majesty's Government of Nepal implemented the New Education Plan, which emphasized the Nepali language and vocational education, and introduced a semester system similar to the American model. The University decided in 1981 to restore the old system with annual centralized examinations, a practice that continues today.

At Tribhuvan University, there are faculties of humanities and social sciences, education, management, and law, which are headed by Faculty Deans. For the technical fields there are university institutes, such as in science and technology,

engineering, forestry, medicine, and agriculture. These are headed by Institute Deans. The Kirtipur campus of Tribhuvan University has Central Departments, e.g., Central Department of Geography, Central Department of English, etc. These departments have chairpersons who refer to the Rector for academic matters and to the appropriate Faculty Dean only for administrative issues. The other campuses have Instruction Committees, which are headed by a chairperson. The chairpersons are under the supervision of the Campus Chief.

In addition to the campuses of Tribhuvan University, many private campuses operate with government approval. They follow the university syllabus and examination schedule.

A new private, national university opened in 1991. It is called Kathmandu University (KU) and its main campus is in Dhulikhel, approximately 45 minutes drive from Kathmandu. Regular bus service between Kathmandu and Dhulikhel is provided by Kathmandu University. KU has established strict admission procedures with entrance examinations and is striving to provide an international standard of education.

Although Fulbright student grantees are not required to affiliate to any academic institution in Nepal, many grantees have found it helpful to network with faculty in relevant departments or [research centers](#) at Tribhuvan University. Grantees undertaking work in the social sciences have also found it useful to participate in public discussions held by various centers such as the [Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies](#) or private organizations such as the [Social Science Baha](#) or [Martin Chautari](#).

Research Assistants & Translators

A large number of Fulbright grantees have found working with Nepali research assistants and translators to be rich experiences that assist in the research work in innumerable ways. For those grantees whose work requires research assistants and or translators, unless they have prior contacts, it is recommended that you wait until you arrive in Nepal to locate such assistance. There is no formalized process for doing so, but the Commission may know of persons who have assisted Fulbrighters in the past. Your Nepali colleagues and Fulbrighters already in country can also assist you with networking to find assistants and translators. Be sure to carefully discuss any past experience with those you are considering hiring and to be as clear as possible about your expectations. Rates will obviously depend on qualifications, the nature of the work, expected time commitments, etc. Finally, please remember to give credit where credit is due if your research work results in publication and you have depended upon the assistance of others.

Reports

The Commission requires each grantee to make a brief report of his or her activities every month so it can keep in touch with the grantee and report to the Board of Directors. In addition to progress on one's academic work, the report can include any problems with cross-cultural issues, and information on travel, guest lectures, or other professional activities. Please report any changes in plans and programs.

Student researchers are encouraged to present their preliminary findings at a “Work-in-Progress Forum” that is usually held about 5-6 months after arrival. The purpose of this forum is to enable grantees to give a very short presentation on research completed thus far to the local community, and to allow for feedback and useful connections to be made that will improve the student's remaining work period. Finally, student researchers are required to give a final, formal academic presentation of their work in a “Fulbright Forum” (i.e., presentation in the USEF-Nepal auditorium) before the end of their grant. The Forum is generally attended by Commission Board members, Fulbright grantees, and other interested persons.

There are also midterm and final reports that must be submitted online to IIE in a timely fashion. They should cover major accomplishments and shortfalls and provide information that might be useful to future grantees. Return tickets will not be issued until the final report is submitted.

Emergency Action Plan

A “Warden” system maintained by the U.S. Embassy in Nepal is in place to provide a means of communication to all U.S. citizens in Nepal who have registered with the U.S. Embassy. The registration form for the Warden system is part of the Welcome Packet provided to all Fulbright grantees upon their arrival at the Commission in Kathmandu. The Commission’s Executive Director acts as Warden for all Fulbrighters in Nepal, although there are also volunteer Wardens for specific geographic locations across neighborhoods in Kathmandu and select cities outside Kathmandu. This Warden system is a network of U.S. citizens who have volunteered to be point-persons for U.S. citizens in the event of natural disaster or other emergency. They are not necessarily employees of the U.S. Embassy in Nepal and do not have any authority beyond that of a volunteer who may provide basic information about safety guidelines, and/or natural disaster preparedness.

The following information is intended to provide guidance to Department of State-funded Fulbright grantees in Nepal as they consider various options and contingencies during possible crisis situations. Provisions for Fulbright-Hays grantees whose grants are funded through the U.S. Department of Education differ from these listed below. Fulbright-Hays program grantees should clarify with the Department of Education any questions regarding provisions during a crisis.

Status of Fulbrighters

As private American citizens, Fulbright grantees do not fall under Chief of Mission (i.e., the U.S. Ambassador in Nepal) authority and cannot be ordered to depart. However, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu can urge grantees to depart if they believe conditions are severe enough, and in such cases may withdraw Fulbright grant monies and privileges (see “ordered departure” item below). The U.S. Department of State does recognize that Fulbright grantees are a distinct group of individuals because they are under the U.S. government sponsorship when overseas and also provides a level of support to Fulbright grantees in the event of a crisis.

General Preparedness and Emergency Procedures

- Fulbright grantees should, upon arrival in Nepal, register their names with the Consular Section at the U.S. Embassy (the registration form is included in the Welcome Packet you will receive upon arrival at the Commission in Kathmandu). The Fulbright program is addressed in the Emergency Action Plan of the U.S. Embassy, and the grantees are included in annex b of its warden system.
- Shortly after arrival in country, all Fulbright grantees will be scheduled for and must attend the Security Briefing given by the U.S. Embassy Regional Security Officer (RSO) at the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu.

- The Commission maintains detailed contact information for current Fulbright grantees in Nepal. This information includes telephone numbers (home, work, and cell phone), physical addresses (home and work), and email. If any part of the contact information changes, grantees should inform such changes to the Commission's Program Administrator Mily Pradhan (or the Executive Director Laurie Vasily or Program Officer Yamal Chandra Rajbhandary). If the grantees are planning on working in non-urban areas, they should also inform the Commission of their detailed itineraries and how they can be reached in case of emergency.
- Grantees must contact the RSO *through* the Commission if they wish to travel outside the Kathmandu area. There is a "Travel Request Form" which must be filled out and submitted at a week prior to travel. Grantees must also inform the Commission of travel outside the parameters of their assignment, including weekend trips and travel outside the country. (See also 'Restricted Areas' below.)
- From time to time, the RSO distributes informational notices that are generally distributed by the Program Administrator to grantees. Grantees should check their email and mailbox at the Commission regularly to see if any new security-related informational notices have been issued.
- Grantees are advised that the standard means of communication may be cut off during crisis situations. It is advisable for grantees to maintain a system of close contact with the Commission, with their geographic wardens and with other grantees so that in case of a break-down in standard systems of communication there may be sufficient information available so that grantees can be located and contacted.
- During crisis situations, as long as the means of communication are open, grantees should maintain contact with the Commission and provide updates on at least a daily basis (probably more if the situation dictates). Information about these requirements will be provided as a potential situation emerges.
- Grantees will receive briefing on the U.S. citizen Warden system upon arriving in Nepal. It is vital that grantees keep in touch with the warden of the neighborhood in Kathmandu or Patan where they live in case of an emergency that curtails mobility. Grantees will learn the particular "rallying points" for Americans nearest to their home, so that if communications with the Commission or the Embassy are not functioning, grantees will know where to go to receive more information. For most neighborhoods, the rallying point will be the nearest large hotel or other area with open ground space.
- Before leaving their site for the rallying point, grantees should have with them: passport; all currency; and important personal papers. They should also leave a written message stating that they have left for the safe haven at their site.

- Grantees should also be familiar with the transportation options, the likely routes they will travel, and the length of time it will take to reach the rallying point.

Restricted Areas

At the beginning of their grant periods, all grantees will receive a briefing from the RSO. Part of the information imparted at these briefings consists of the current list of districts and other areas within Nepal where, due to security concerns, travel is either restricted or prohibited by Americans who are subject to the authority of the Chief of Mission. Although Fulbright grantees are not subject to the direct authority of the Chief of Mission, the Commission works in consultation with the RSO and has only recently lifted the suspension of the Fulbright program in such districts and areas of Nepal.

Anytime a grantee intends to go to a field site, he/she must check with the RSO through the Commission to ensure that the area of intended visit is not on the embassy's list of "no go" districts and update himself/herself on any security issues in that area. If security concerns make it impossible for the grantee to carry out the research that the original proposal envisioned, reasonable modifications to the research proposal, in consultation with the Commission, may be made.

Emergence of a Crisis

- If the situation is uncertain, the Commission, in conjunction with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State (ECA/A/E), will evaluate the threat potential to a grantee and his/her dependents, and may offer grantees elective or temporary relocation to another in-country site.
- If the situation is so serious that it poses a threat to a grantee's and his/her dependents' lives, especially when violence is anticipated or already occurring, the Commission may temporarily suspend the Fulbright program for a specific region/locale or the entire country. The Commission will facilitate relocation of the grantee together with his/her dependents to either an in-country safe haven, a third country location, or the U.S.

Authorized/ordered Departure

In the event of a serious crisis, the U.S. Embassy may consider imposing either an "Authorized Departure," or an "Ordered Departure." Each of these situations and its effect on Fulbright grantees is described below.

- Authorized departure

A State Department announcement authorizing voluntary departure from affected posts of American personnel and dependents does not automatically require departure of U.S. Fulbright grantees, and the announcement of an *authorized*

departure does not necessarily lead to a suspension of the Fulbright program. The Commission will stay in contact with grantees and work out with the ECA/A/E the best solution on a case by case basis. Grantees should not feel constrained to stay in a situation that they feel is risky; nor, however, should they feel that they must leave due to an advisory authorizing departure. The Commission will facilitate the departure of any grantees and/or dependents who wish to leave the country. ECA/A/E will assist with arrangements for temporary assignment to another country and other issues related to the grant.

Grantees will be advised by the Fulbright Commission if an *authorized departure* is announced and they should then contact the Commission for all available information that may affect their own decision to leave Nepal or stay in the country. It is the sole responsibility of the individual grantee to decide whether he or she leaves or stays in the country. The Fulbright Commission bears no part in the decision and assumes no responsibility for the safety of its grantees. All grantees are requested to notify the Commission's Executive Director of their decision to leave Nepal or stay in the country.

The following scenarios may occur after the announcement of an *authorized departure*:

- a. *Grantee decides to leave Nepal and resign the grant.* (See below)
 - b. *Grantee decides to remain in Nepal and continue with the grant.* The grantee will continue receiving his/her grant benefits until such time as an ordered departure might occur, in which case ordered departure, provision b. below would apply).
 - c. *Grantee decides to leave Nepal without resigning grant.* (See below)
 - d. *Grantee is reassigned without curtailment of grant.* (See below)
- Ordered departure

In the event of a more serious situation, the U.S. Embassy, in consultation with the State Department in Washington, may declare an *ordered departure* of USG dependents and/or non-emergency personnel. In such a situation, the continued viability of the Fulbright program would also be evaluated. ECA/A/E, in consultation with the Commission, determines whether the Fulbright program can sustain operation under current circumstances and, if not, may suspend the program. If the program is suspended, all Fulbright grantees will be asked to leave the country.

The following scenarios may occur after the announcement of an *ordered departure*:

a. *Grantee decides to leave Nepal and resign the grant.*

In the event grantee elects to return to the U.S. and resign his/her grant, the exact timing of departure should be coordinated with the Commission and host institution, if any. The grant would be amended to shorten it to the length of time in the country of assignment. If the grantee has received payment of benefits beyond the amount authorized in the amended grant, s/he would be required to return any overpayment to the cooperating agency/commission. Fulbright grants already include an allowance for return travel to the U.S. ECA/A/E would authorize a financial payment (stipend and/or maintenance allowance) for 30 days from the date of departure to assist with resettlement in the U.S. If a grant is terminated, all applicable reports will become due within 30 days.

b. *Grantee elects to remain in Nepal:*

If a grantee elects to remain, even after the announcement of an *ordered departure*, ECA/A/E may withdraw the grant and discontinue the stipend/maintenance allowance. If the grantee has received payment of benefits beyond the withdrawal, s/he would be required to return any overpayment to the Commission. The grantee is asked to sign a statement of release acknowledging s/he is no longer considered a Fulbright fellow and must not continue to represent him/herself as such. The grantee does not forfeit the return travel entitlement, but must meet any increase in travel costs him/herself. The grantee's State Department ASPE insurance coverage ends at the date of resignation as well.

c. *Grantee decides to leave Nepal without resigning the grant.*

The Commission may determine that it is in the best interests of the program that grantees depart without curtailing the Fulbright grant. Factors governing such a decision include security concerns at the place of assignment and potential to resume the assignment in the near future. Where it is determined that departure without curtailment of grant is advisable, ECA/A/E authorizes payment of up to one month's stipend for a grantee who is out of country of assignment with the expectation that circumstances may permit an early return to host country. If a return is not feasible (i.e., no change, or worsening of the situation), ECA/A/E authorizes a further one month's stipend to assist with resettlement in the U.S.

Depending on the local situation, grantees may choose to leave the country temporarily during a crisis. While costs of emergency air tickets, diversionary travel and other exceptional expenses may be covered from grant funds, grant funds may not be used for grantees' cost-of-living expenses outside of Nepal and the cost of any emergency travel would be deducted from the grant total.

d. *Grantee is reassigned without curtailment of grant.*

Grantees may select reassignment in another country; however, it is not possible for ECA/A/E to guarantee reassignment. Factors affecting reassignment include the length of time remaining in the grant, the scholar's field of study, the need for expertise in another country, and ability to obtain timely approvals from the potential new host institution and PAO/Commission. Reassignments are usually within the same geographic region.

Telephone List

Emergency Numbers

The Commission for Educational Exchange between the US and Nepal (USEF/Nepal)

<u>US Embassy Post One</u> (24 hours):		4444779, 4444780, 4437330, 4437332
4007269 (direct)		4414598 (Advising Center)
4007266 (direct)		<u>Fax</u> : 4410881
Through US Embassy		
switchboard: ext. 4100		
		<u>Residence</u>
(See below for US Embassy switchboard numbers)		Laurie A. Vasily
		director@fulbrightnepal.org.np
<u>US Embassy Post One Mobile</u> : 98510-67461		Cell phone: 9851017094
<u>Nepal Police</u> : 100/101/102, 4226998, 4226999	Yamal C. Rajbhandary	5534657
	yamal@fulbrightnepal.org.np	
<u>Nepal Fire Brigade</u> : 101, 4221177, 4223897	Cell phone: 9803041120	
Other Numbers		
<u>US Embassy</u>		Basu Manandhar 4419828
<i>Switchboard numbers (office hours)</i> : 4007200		basu@fulbrightnepal.org.np
Regional Security Officer (RSO): ext.4262		Cell phone: 9841458988
<u>Phora Durbar</u>		Mily Pradhan 4375829
<i>Switchboard number</i> : 4257449		mpradhan@fulbrightnepal.org.np
Compound: ext.4712		Cell phone:9841276679
<u>CIWEC Clinic</u> :	4424111	
<u>Norvic Hospital</u> :	4258554	
<u>B&B Hospital</u> :	5531930	
	5531933	

Please remember that any time you shift your location, whether it be a move from Kathmandu to a field site or a move within Kathmandu, to let the Fulbright Commission's Mily Pradhan (or the Executive Director, or Program Officer Yamal Chandra Rajbhandary) know where you are and how we can get in touch with you. Contacts details are noted above.

Fulbright Commission/Nepal
May 2011

APPENDIX I: Loan Deferments

This information is copied from the IIE website and can be accessed at:

http://us.fulbrightonline.org/resources_current_loan.html

Can I defer my student loans while I am on my Fulbright grant?

In most cases the answer is yes. However, it is your responsibility to confirm this with your lending institution. As a general rule, Fulbright fellowships fall under the category of *Graduate Fellowship Deferments*. The Graduate Fellowship Deferment is for students engaged in a full-time course of study in a graduate fellowship program such as the Fulbright program.

It has been our experience that the form most generally accepted has SCH located at the top right corner as opposed to EDU. It is our understanding that the EDU is to be used for an in-school deferment when a student is still enrolled in a U.S. institution. Fulbright is not considered an in-school deferment so if you file in that manner you may be denied a loan deferment. But again, it is your responsibility to confirm with your lender that you are filling-in the appropriate form.

The following website is very helpful for downloading deferment forms and obtaining all the information you may need regarding loan deferments: www.dlservicer.ed.gov

Who fills out the forms?

You should fill out the student portion of the deferment form and sign it before mailing it to the IIE address below. We will fill-out the institutional portion, certify that the information is correct and then mail it to your lender. Be sure that your lender's address is on the form.

For optimal results, do NOT send the deferment forms to the Commission/Post or institution you are affiliating with in your host country. While they would be happy to fill-out the forms for you, the lender will most likely not recognize them as an appropriate program official and will therefore reject your deferment request.

When should I send in the forms?

Once you have your flight arrangements confirmed and you are certain of your start date, you may send us the forms. Please include a cover letter indicating your full name, your host country and your official grant dates. *Deferment forms will only be completed to cover you during your grant period, regardless of how long you plan to stay in your host country.*

Note: Due to the high volume of forms we receive, we cannot fax your deferment papers to your lender so plan accordingly.

Please indicate the country of your grant and mail the deferment forms to:

INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION
U.S. STUDENT PROGRAMS DIVISION
809 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

APPENDIX II: Vaccine Schedule for Adults

This is the list of vaccinations recommended by the US Embassy Medical Unit in Kathmandu. It may be more comprehensive than what is recommended by the US Government's Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, but the US Embassy Medical Unit feels that anyone spending a substantial period in Nepal should receive them. Note that some vaccines require multiple injections to function correctly.

Typhoid (oral)	1 tab ac with warm/cold water x 4 days; Do not take with antibiotics. Booster every 5 years.
Typhim Vi B	0.5 cc IM every 2 years (>2 years old)
TB skin test	Q 2 years; 0.1 cc I.D. (Same day or 30 days after MMR or JeVax; Varivax: apply PPD first and give Varivax 48 hours later when PPD is read)
DTetanus	Every 5-10 years; for adults never vaccinated: day 0, 30 and 6 months TIG 2 cc if injured.
Tdap	0.5 ml IM Single dose for those 18 - 65 years who have not received Tdap before (Adacel). Give 5 yrs after prior DTaP or TD but interval of 2 yrs OK.
Hepatitis B *	> 20 years: 1 cc I.M. (day 0, 30 and 180); < 19 years: 0.5 cc; no booster.
IPV	1 booster as adult (0.5 cc I.M. or S.Q.); IPV series: day 0, 30 and 6 months.
Hepatitis A (1440 IU) *	> 18 years give 1 cc I.M.; day 0 and 6 months; booster every 10 years
Rabies (pre-immunization)	1 cc on day 0, 7 and 28.
Rabies (Post exp)	Day 0 and 3 if received pre-immunization; If not, give 4 doses day 0, 3, 7, 14 and HRIG.
MMR	If born on or after 1957 (a 2 nd dose of MMR is needed for those who do not have proof of immunity)
JeVax	JeVax (1cc SQ) Day 0, 7, 30 Booster every 2 yrs
Varivax	0.5 cc SQ; > 13 years give 2 on day 0 and 30
Herpes Zoster	0.65 ml SC single dose given to 60 years or older regardless of previous episode of Herpes Zoster.
Pneumococcal (Pneumovax23)	0.5 ml SC/IM one time booster after 5 years for high risk groups*
HPV (Gardasil)	0.5 ml IM Up to 26 years of age. Administer at 0, 2, and 6 months.
Meningococcal (MPSV4)	0.5 ml SQ older than 2 years for high risk groups.* Booster 3-5 years. 15 minutes wait after injection

*Twinrix (combined Hep B & A): If used must administer 3 doses at 0, 1, and 6 months. If only given 2 doses of Twinrix, finish series with regular Hep A & Hep B injections.

*Pneumococcal high risk groups: chronic pulmonary disease (except asthma), chronic cardio vascular disease, DM, chronic liver diseases (including cirrhosis), chronic alcoholism, Alaska Natives & certain Native Americans.

*Meningococcal high risk groups: Travel to Sub-Saharan Africa, Saudi Arabia, military, 1st year college students.

For the best up to date information on vaccinations (and the medical facilities, etc., available at CIWEC clinic in Kathmandu), please see www.ciwec-clinic.com